

Case 3306

***Drosophila elegans* Bock & Wheeler, 1972 (Insecta, Diptera):
proposed conservation of the specific name**

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Abstract. The purpose of this application, under Article 23.9.3 of the Code, is to conserve the specific name *Drosophila elegans* Bock & Wheeler, 1972, a species of fruitfly important in phylogenetic studies. The name is threatened by a senior homonym *Drosophila elegans* Statz, 1940 established for a poorly preserved Oligocene fossil and never since used as valid. It is proposed that the name of the fossil be suppressed and replaced with the substitute name *Drosophila statzi*.

Keywords. Nomenclature; taxonomy; Diptera; *Drosophila elegans*; *Drosophila statzi*; fruitflies; phylogenetic studies.

1. The specific name *Drosophila elegans* was established by Statz (1940, p. 152, pl. 22, fig. 46, pl. 27, fig. 91) with a short description based on a single, poorly preserved specimen from Upper Oligocene strata near Rott, Germany. The generic name was written as '*Drosophila*', indicating the uncertain interpretation of the fossil. The accompanying illustrations do not show useful characters for species identification and could apply to hundreds of known *Drosophila* species. Despite the fact that Statz's publication is an important contribution to the study of fossil Diptera, the name *D. elegans* Statz has never been used in any phylogenetic study. Statz's publication was included in *Zoological Record*, vol. 77 for 1940, on p. 75 and *Drosophila elegans* was listed on p. 255. The first subsequent publication containing the name *D. elegans* Statz was Evenhuis (1994, p. 444) in a catalogue of fossil Diptera.

2. Bock & Wheeler (1972, p. 28) published the name *Drosophila elegans* for a different taxon with a description giving characters of the external and genital morphology and chromosomes as well as its position within the new *elegans* species-subgroup of the *melanogaster* species-group of the large and important genus *Drosophila* Fallén, 1823. The holotype and additional specimens from Baguio City, Luzon, Philippines, were originally deposited in the collection of the Genetics Foundation, University of Texas at Austin, Texas, U.S.A., and are now in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, U.S.A. This species is widespread in southern Asia.

3. The name *Drosophila elegans* with authorship attributed to Bock & Wheeler is mentioned in a large number of publications (e.g. Bock, 1980; Kopp & True, 2002; Schawaroch, 2002; a list of 43 additional publications is held by the Commission Secretariat). These publications predominantly deal with the phylogenetic analysis of the *Drosophila melanogaster* species-group, one of the most intensively studied *Drosophila* species-groups in recent years.

4. Replacing the name of the junior primary homonym, *Drosophila elegans* Bock & Wheeler, 1972, would produce confusion within a well-established phylogeny. Therefore, we propose suppression of the name of the senior homonym, *Drosophila elegans* Statz, 1940; subject to the Commission approving this, we hereby propose the substitute name *Drosophila statzi*.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to suppress the name *elegans* Statz, 1940, as published in the binomen *Drosophila elegans*, for the purposes of both the Principle of Priority and the Principle of Homonymy;
- (2) to place the following names on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *elegans* Bock & Wheeler, 1972, as published in the binomen *Drosophila elegans*;
 - (b) *statzi* Ashburner & Bächli, 2004, as published in the binomen *Drosophila statzi* (substitute name for *Drosophila elegans* Statz, 1940);
- (3) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the name *elegans* Statz, 1940, as published in the binomen *Drosophila elegans* and suppressed in (1) above.

References

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- Evenhuis, N.L.** 1994. Catalogue of the fossil flies of the World (Insecta: Diptera). 600 pp. Backhuys, Leiden.
- Kopp, A. & True, J.R.** 2002. Phylogeny of the Oriental *Drosophila melanogaster* species group: a multilocus reconstruction. *Systematic Biology*, **51**: 786–805.
- Schawaroch, V.** 2002. Phylogeny of a paradigm lineage: the *Drosophila melanogaster* species group (Diptera: Drosophilidae). *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*, **76**: 21–37.
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Comments on this case are invited for publication (subject to editing) in the *Bulletin*; they should be sent to the Executive Secretary, I.C.Z.N., The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, U.K. (e-mail: iczn@nhm.ac.uk).